

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. - 21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) A composition comprising zirconium oxide and cerium oxide, the composition comprising a zirconium oxide proportion of at least 50% by weight, a maximum reducibility temperature of at most 500°C, a specific surface area of at least 40m<sup>2</sup>/g after calcination for 6 hours at 500°C, and comprising a predominant tetragonal phase.

23. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 22, further comprising at least one lanthanide other than cerium.

24. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 23, wherein the lanthanide is lanthanum, neodymium or praseodymium.

25. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 22, comprising a zirconium oxide content of at least 65% by weight.

26. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 22, comprising a maximum reducibility temperature of at most 480°C.

27. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 22, comprising a specific surface area of at least 70 m<sup>2</sup>/g.

28. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 22, comprising a specific surface area of at least 30 m<sup>2</sup>/g after calcination at 900°C for 6 hours.

29. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 28, comprising a specific surface area of at least 45 m<sup>2</sup>/g after calcination at 900°C for 6 hours.

30. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 22, comprising a specific surface area of at least 25 m<sup>2</sup>/g after calcination at 1000°C for 6 hours.

31. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 23 22, wherein the composition is in the form of a solid solution of cerium, in zirconium oxide.

32. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing a composition as claimed in claim 22, wherein it comprises comprising the following steps:

- (a) forming a mixture comprising a zirconium compound, a cerium compound and, optionally, a lanthanide other than cerium;
- (b) mixing said mixture with a basic compound, to obtain a precipitate;

(c) heating said precipitate in an aqueous medium; ~~and, then,~~

(d) either firstly adding an additive, selected from the group consisting of anionic surfactants, nonionic surfactants, polyethylene glycols, carboxylic acids, salts of carboxylic acids, and surfactants of the carboxymethylated fatty alcohol ethoxylate type in the medium resulting from the previous step (c), and, then, optionally separating said precipitate; or (d') ~~or,~~ firstly separating the precipitate obtained in step (c) and, then, adding said additive to the precipitate;

(e) subjecting to a milling operation the precipitate obtained in step (d) or (d');

and

(f) calcining the precipitate obtained in step (e).

33. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein in step ~~(e)~~ (f) the precipitate is calcined either in an oxidizing atmosphere or firstly in an inert gas and then secondly in an oxidizing atmosphere.

34. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein, the zirconium compound, the cerium compound and the lanthanide other than cerium, is a nitrate, acetate, chloride or ceric ammonium nitrate compound.

35. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the zirconium or cerium compound is a sol.

36. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein, in the mixture of step (a), the cerium compound presents cerium in the Ce(III) form and during step (a) or during step (b), an oxidizing agent is added.

37. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein in step b) (b) a basic compound the mixture is further being added into a solution of this basic compound.

38. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein in step (c) the precipitate is being heated to a temperature of at least 100°C.

39. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein in step (e), the milling is a wet milling operation.

40. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein in step (e), the milling is carried out by subjecting a suspension of the precipitate to a shearing action.

41. (Previously Presented) A catalytic system, comprising the composition as claimed in claim 22.

42. (Currently Amended) A method of automobile postcombustion post-  
combustion catalysis of exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, said

method comprising the step of treating said exhaust gases with a catalytic system as claimed in claim 41.

43. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 26, having a maximum reducibility temperature of at most 400°C.

44. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 27, having a specific surface area of at least 80m<sup>2</sup>/g after calcination at 500°C for 6 hours.

45. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 31 23, wherein the composition is in the form of a solid solution further comprises of cerium, and the at least one lanthanide other than cerium, in zirconium oxide.